(SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per the information received from Government of Gujarat, 5247 Small Scale Industries (including salt units) and 34358 Cottage and Rural Industries have suffered damages in the recent earthquake. The losses incurred by these industries are Rs. 243.57 crores and Rs. 77.18 crores respectively.

(c) A special relief package of measures for persons/business affected by the earthquake in Gujarat has been announced by the Reserve Bank of India on 12th February, 2001. This includes freezing of recoveries and extension of new loans on liberal terms for SSI in the affected areas. The Government of Gujarat has also announced a package for rehabilitatiton of earthquake affected industrial units including Small Scale and Cottage Industries on 25.2.2001. The package provides for SSI sector, the need based bankable loan assistance for two years, recovery of electricity charges on actual consumption basis for one year, exemption from stamp duty and assistance for repair of damaged building, plant and machinery. For Cottage Industries, the package provides assistance for tool-kits for artisans, local self-employed and handicraft artisans, assistance for temporary sheds for artisans, providing infrastructure facilities in Rural Industry Development Centres and setting up of Handloom and Handicraft Parks.

Development of SSI

† 4558. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the status of cottage and small scale industries located in various States of the country; and

(b) the measures taken by Government for the development and promotion of small scale industries in the country as compared to the last three years?

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† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) The cottage and small scale industries (SSIs), spread all over the country have been consistently showing increase in production, employment and exports. As per the Planning Commission, employment through such units is targeted to cross 697 lakhs by 2001-2002.

(b) Promotion of cottage and small scale industries has been one of the conscious policies of the Government. During the last three years, a number of steps have been taken in this regard. These include enhancement of limits of project cost for funding under National Equity Fund of SIDBI, increase in limit of composite loans, Specialised SSI bank branches, raising of exemption limit for excise, National Programme for Rural Industrialisations etc. In addition, a comprehensive policy package was announced on 30th August, 2000 which *inter alia* includes easier access to credit, availability of collateral free composite loans upto Rs. 25.00 lakhs, capital subsidy for technological upgradation and improved infrastructure.

Budget allocation for Space Research

4559. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the Budget allocation for Space Research during the last five years;

(b) whether it is a fact that India could not make any advancement in Space Research;

(c) the achievement of Space Research in India; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that the country is lagging behind in Space Research and Ocean Research because of lack of Government's interest?